CHICAGO TIMES

NEWSLETTER OF THE CHICAGO TI-99/4A USERS GROUP

WELCOME BACK FROM VACATION
PLENTY OF FAIRE NEWS INSIDE
SEPT. MEETING HELD 2ND SAT.

SEPT 1989
EDITOR: Bob Demeter

MEETING SEPT. 9th . . . .

This month's meeting will be Saturday Sept 9th. at the AMERICAN LEGION HALL in Hillside. Annual Auction. Meeting time: 1-3 pm

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CALL THE BBS AT 312 862-0182
HOT LINE # 312 869-4304

TI-FAIRE

NOVEMBER 4, 1989

HELD AT:	Holiday Inn 3505 Algonquin Rd. Rolling Meadows, Il (312-259-5000)
PRODUCED BY:	Chicago Area TI-99/4a Users' Group P. O. Box 578341 Chicago, Il. 60657 Sandy Bartels, Faire Manager, 312 859-3850
SOCIAL MIXER:	Friday, November 3, 1989 8:00pm - 12:00pm admission - $5.00
FAIRE MOVE-IN:	Saturday, November 4, 1989 6:30am - 8:30am
FAIRE HOURS:	Saturday, November 4, 1989 9:00am - 5:00pm admission - $4.00
FAIRE MOVE-OUT:	Saturday, November 4, 1989 5:00pm - 6:00pm
DINNER:	Saturday, November 4, 1989 7:00pm - 9:30pm admission - $15.00
EXHIBIT SPACE:	$75.00 per 8 foot table
HOTEL ROOM RATE:	$50.00 - single $50.00 - double $50.00 - tower
LIMOUSINE SERVICE:	free to and from O'hare Airport and hotel
HELD IN CONJUNCTION WITH:	The Milwaukee TI-Faire November 5, 1989 / 9:00am - 5:00pm Quality Inn 5311 S. Howell Ave. Milwaukee, Wisc. (across from Mitchell Field Airport)
PRODUCED BY:	The Milwaukee Area 99/4a Users' Group Mr. Gene Hitz (414-535-0133) 4122 N. Glenway Wauwatosa, Wisc. 53222

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MEETING DATES

We have moved our meetings to the Broadview American Legion Hall 4941 Butterfield Rd. Hillside, Ill. The Executive board meets from 11 to 1. The regular meeting is from 1 to 3 pm. All are invited to attend.

- The Sept meeting will be the SECOND SATURDAY 9/9/89
- The Oct meeting is on Saturday 10/7/89
- The November meeting is our ANNUAL FAIRE. 11/4/89
- The December meeting is Saturday 12/2/89

Membership fee - $21.00

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CHICAGO FAIRE `89' UPDATE

By Sandy Bartels

It's time to start to prepare for the Chicago TI 99/4A Faire. It's going to be a biggie again this year. There is only limited room at the mixer and the dinner, so get your tickets now. Reserve your hotel rooms now. Last year a few people waited until the night before the Faire to get their room and found that all the rooms were booked. They ended up sleeping on the floor in the hospitality room, SO BOOK YOUR ROOMS NOW.

Last year we had so many people say how much fun their families and wives had at the Faire. I hope more men will bring their wives and children. I am happy to report that we have arranged with the hotel to run a shuttle bus back and forth between the hotel and the huge shopping center, Woodfield Mall, every few hours, so while the men are at the Faire the wives can shop as well. We also have arranged for a kids night out program to be held again this year.

I want every Chicago TI 99/4A User Group member to try and attend this year's Faire. Remember that if the vendors that come to our Faire don't get our support they will go out-of-business, and if they go out-of-business we will have no support for our machines. Lets make this the vendors best year ever. Save your money and come to the Faire. Keep in mind if you don't buy their poducts, they might not be back next year. Come out and enjoy a TI weekend.

MEMBERSHIP NEWS AND VIEWS

by James Brooks

Greetings of the summer to all and to all a good day. The summer heat is now upon us all (that is, off a couple of days, on a couple of days). I hope everyone is keeping their "TOY99's" or their "GENNYS'" nice and cool. It's a good idea to have a small outside fan helping, especially on the "GENEVE". It runs hotter than the original TI-99/4A. My GENEVE sometimes gets so hot, it just stops if I forget to turn the fan on.

I received a letter from a late renewer asking for a membership card. I forgot to send out new cards for some late renewals. So, if you are one of those, I'm sorry I forgot. Please sound off and remind me.

I know a few of the members really got some great bargains at the June 3rd Auction. The meeting was well attended and the AUCTIONEERS really did a fine job.

Things have been rather quiet since the June meeting. But,

we did get 1 brand new member along with three new former members (members before 1987). I am happy to see the membership growing a little, even without world wide advertising. I think it is due to the quality articles in the "Chicago TImes".
I missed the exciting picnic July 2, but I heard that it was great. Hal Shanafield did a great job of organizing it, good work Hal.
Now is the time to start getting ready for the Faire on Nov 4, at the Holiday Inn in Rolling Meadows. More details are found elsewhere in this issue, and, on the Group's BBS. The board is located in Calumet City, IL. (just south of the City) at (312) 862-0182. If you need help in various areas concerning the TI-99/4A and GENEVE 9640, this is were to call. You are encouraged to call and make use of this BBS. The #1 supporter of the Group's board is the Chicago Connection at (312) 453-7831 located in Norridge, IL. Another supporting BBS is Chicago-South, located on the Chicago's South Side at (312) 651-7252.
Well that about covers it for this month. I hope to see you all at the American Legion Hall in Hillside, 4149 Butterfield Rd. Remember, it's September 9, at 1:00 PM.

WANTED AND FOR SALE NOTICES...

Ms. Ada Kee would like to sell her TI Computer. She has a complete system that consists of the following: TI-99/4A Computer, PEB, disk drive, 2 memory (?) cartridges, and other misc. cartridges, speech synthesizer, LOGO, and misc. books. If you are interested in this system, please give her a call at (312) 736-1308 (home) or (312) 642-1105 (work). Make her an offer.

John Hoebing wishes to purchase 4 used bare TI consoles. If you have one or more to sell, or if you know of someone who does, please give him a call at (312) 670-2660, and make him an offer. This is his work number, please call Monday - Friday and during regular business hours.

Mr. Al ("The Magnificent Stumper") Stump has two 256K Horizon RAM disks for sale. He is asking $180.00 apiece. Please contact Don Jones if you are interested in purchasing one of these HRD's.

Jon Bartels has a quantity of wide carriage printer paper. If you are interested, please leave a message on our User Group "hot-line." The number is (312) 869-4304.

FAIRE SPEAKERS' SCHEDULE

The hotel facility has requested us to conclude our Faire one hour earlier. For this reason, our last speaker will conclude his/her presentation at approximately 05:00 p.m. This will also be the time that the Faire closes.

Here is a schedule of the speakers who have committed themselves to making presentations:

09:30 Bud Mills will be demonstrating the Horizon RAM disk and the Horizon p-GRAM card.

10:00 Gary Bowser of Toronto, Ontario will demonstrate his Super Module Expander and a new sound card for the 4A. Both of these products are expected to be available at the Faire. There is another product which may be available and which therefore may also be demonstrated. We are also hoping for a demonstration of his Z-80 interpreter card. With this card in PEB, the user will be able to use software written in the Z-80 and the CPM environments. It will also be able to play games written for Coleco Vision and Ntendo.

10:30 Tim Horn of the Mid Atlantic Ninety-Niners (MANNERS) will be speaking about a program to get unused and "closeted" systems out of the closet and either into use or into the hands of teachers and rehabilitation specialists and how this can be used as a means of expanding the 4A community.

11:00

11:30

12:00

12:30

01:00 Jan Joel Janowski does a demonstration of his fully portable TI-99/4A and his MBP clock card.

02:00 Our own SysOp, Mike (a.k.a. "The Frogman," b.k.a. "Wetsuit Warrior," alias, "ROBOFROG") Maksimik will demonstrate his FDOS program environment. This is an original and new operating system for the 4A. He will also demonstrate his modification of a Kraft serial "mouse" so that it can be used with a 4A.

02:30

03:00

03:30 Myarc will demonstrate the 9640 Geneve Home Computer

and the Myarc Hard Floppy Disk Controller Card (HFDC).

05:00 The 1989 Chicago Users' Group's TI Faire officially closes.

The above schedule is tentative and is therefore subject to change. At this point, we definitely expect for more speakers to be scheduled at a later date. Announcements will be made in the pages of this newsletter and on the users' group's bbs relative to any new additions and significant changes.

MINUTES BY MARCY

The Executive Board Meeting of June 3, 1989 was brought to order at 11:30 am.

The agenda and the minutes from last meeting were approved.

-----We are still in need of a replacement for Mike Chappell to act as Publicity Chairman. This is not a time consumming job, but a very necessary one. Ads will have to be placed for our upcoming Faire in November. These ads need to be placed well in advance, usually starting in July. We'll need to place a full page ad in Micropendium's September and August issues. The chairman also sends out news releases to other publications and news medias to try to get free space and announcements.

Also, the Publicity Chairman will have the task of getting free publicity during the year. Then, people will hear about us.

If you are interested in becoming the Publicity Chairman, please step forward, click your heals three times, and say "I volunteer, I volunteer, I volunteer". Also give Don Jones a call on the hot line #312-869-4304 to let him know.

-----We are still looking for someone to coordinate the type of program that Jim Horn suggested at our last Faire. This was to get people who have closeted or are not in need of their TI systems to either join our group (if they didn't know about it before) or donate their system to a non-profit organization for a tax credit.

The concept is simple. Just keep a list going of churches, schools and nursing homes that would like to have computer systems donated to them for educational use or therapy for patients. Then when you know of persons that have a TI and don't use it anymore, contact them to sell them on this idea. Inform them that they can work with their tax accountant to get full credit for what they paid for it way back when it was a lot of money. When they agree to donate it, you just

have to stear them to the right place to receive the donation. Now this does not sound to hard to do. And it will make you feel really good helping all these people.

If you feel that you would like to do this for mankind and also the TI community, please contact Don Jones on the hot line #312-869-4304. I know there is at least one person out there that just needs a little encouragement to get started with this project. Show us you can do it!!!!!

-----Don mentioned that with all the moving of our meeting place, we have forgotten about having our SIG groups. It is time that we start thinking of starting up the SIG groups again.

You remember what SIG groups are don't you? These are the small classes that we were giving after our meetings. Included in these SIGs were the Geneve Sig; Business Applications Sig; Beginners Sig & TI Writer Sig amoung others. Don started up the Geneve Sig at the June meeting. How about getting the other SIGs going when we return in September? The leaders know who they are. If you headed up a SIG last year or would like to head one this year, please step forward at the September meeting and get the class going. I know I would like to learn more. Wouldn't you?

-----There was a discussion as to whether we should advertise in COMPUTER SHOPPER or not. It was decided that at this time we should just proceed with placing free space information and not put out the money for an ad just yet. With getting our group in the TI listing section, we might accomplish the advertisement that we are seeking, which is to let people know about us if they don't already.

-----Since our schedule of meetings has been haywire from first Saturday to second Saturday, I would like to let you know that we have reserved the American Legion Hall in Hillside for the first Saturday of each month with the exception of the September meeting. That will be on the second Saturday. As of today, we have booked up until January. Please make a note of this.

Also for any newer members, we take a break every summer. This means that after the June meeting, we don't meet again until September.

-----There was a discussion about giving a special deal for early memership renewals and what the membership renewal will cost at the Faire. After the discussion the motion on the floor was a flat $18 from September 1st until December 31st. After that, the renewal would be $21. This motion was voted and passed. After the motion there was still more discussion regarding this matter. An ammendment to the motion was that every year we have a $3 discount from September 1st to

December 31st for the membership renewal and after December 31st membership renewal is regular price. This way we don't have to discuss it every year. The motion and the ammendment were seconded, voted and passed. This does not pertain to renewing membership at the Faire. That will be discussed at a later time.

-----The Boise Valley 99er's are unable to reciprocate with us on our newsletter exchange any more as they no longer have a newsletter because their group has gotten so small. They would like to still receive our newsletter but state that they each cannot afford to become members to receive it.

There was a discussion on the floor about whether or not we should continue to send them a newsletter each month without becoming members. After the discussion, the motion on the floor was that the President, Don Jones, send the Boise Valley 99er's a letter stating that we cannot reciprocate what they are asking and explain the reasons why. Which is that we do not want to set this pressident. However, if they make a single membership of their group which would only be a few dollars a member, they would be able to get a newsletter each month. The motion was voted and passed.

-----The Librarian's Report was not given because Lionel Bordelon the new Librarian could not be at this meeting. However, the library itself was present for members to purchase programs.

-----At the last meeting, no new memberships were purchased. At this time the membership stands at about 400.

-----Hank Ellerman then gave the events report. Today was the annual auction. When we come back from summer break, the September meeting we will have a TPA demonstration and also a demonstration of a "Hayes compatible" modem.

-----The Bulletin Board Report was next. It has been averaging about eight calls a day. At this point the board only crashes when there is a storm and a "brown out". However, there has been no damage to the system.

One of the new features of the board is that if you hit "I" in the main menu, you get a menu listing information. This consists of information like the Faire, current events, announcements, bulletin board numbers, etc.

Mike has bought the hard drive for the board, however, he could not get a power supply cabinet with it. He asked if anyone had an extra power supply cabinet that they would like to donate for the bulletin board. He was able to pick one up later during the auction. This came from a total system donated by Mr. William Crooks of Woodruff, Wisconsin. Mr. Crooks mentioned that he wanted to donate the system for use

by us or be put into the auctin. We really appreciate your thoughtfullness, Mr. Crooks, and many thanks go out to you for your donation.

-----The 1989 Faire Report was next. The letters went out to last years exhibitors on May 30th. The next mailing, to all TI vendors, went out by June 30th. At this time there is nothing else to report for the Faire. However, Sandy Bartels is still asking for volunteers to help with the Faire. She says we still need volunteers to help before, during and after the Faire. Please let her know as soon as possible. As you know how frustrating it can be not knowing if all the bases are covered.

-----Certain executive board members are using equipment that belongs to the group. These persons are to submit to Don Jones a list of what equipment they have and the model numbers.

-----Ernie Pergrem gave a report on the Educational Library status. Right now he is waiting for educational programs from L.A. before he can organize the Educational Library. After he does this, he will send out letters to the schools that have TI computers.

Ernie has been putting information files about our group and the 1989 Faire on DELPHI.

-----Hal Shanafield gave a report on library cassette orders. This year we have sent out about 25 orders on cassette tape. At this time we are still receiving cassette tapes through a donation. Hal's suggestion of price was $2 a tape with eight programs on it. It was suggested by the Executive Board that since Hal is doing this project, he should set the price of the Tapes. Therefore, Hal's suggestion of the price of $2 a tape was accepted.

The Executive Board Meeting was adjourned at 1:00 pm. The General Membership meeting was opened with a few announcements of the above. The major portion of the meeting was dedicated to our 1989 Auction.

This was the biggest auction we have had. So many things were donated, even two full systems, printers and modems. There was a total of 95 items to auction off. The total money brought in from the auction was $896. A great big thank you of appreciation goes out to all that donated items and all that bid and purchased the items. Remember how much fun you had when it comes to next June's auction.

The General Membership Meeting was adjourned at 3:00 pm.

Submitted by: Marcy Brun, Secretary.

THE PRESIDENT SPEAKS...

I am happy to say that things are going smoothly within our club. We are presently caught up on all of our committments. The problems & complaints which formerly burdened us have been addressed. We are happy to have a somewhat greater participation in executive board mandated activities. Relevent to this last item, I would like to thank and welcome Ernie Pergrem to the executive board. Ernie is now our education chairman. If you have need of information related to educational software, that is available through our group, please direct your inquiries to Ernie. Ernie is also our groups SysOp on DELPHI. Welcome aboard, Ernie, and thanks for the extra pair of good hands. Good people are always hard to find!

An extra thanks to my friend and neighbor, Irv Levinson. I am thanking Irv for all of the work that he did to get out our sample disk and catalogue to those members who paid an extra $3.00 back in 1987.

Relative to the on-going, non-attending status, all of the packets that we owed anyone have been sent out, at least to the best of our knowledge. Currently this status has been discontinued. If you paid an extra $3.00 in 1987 but have not received your packet, please send us a copy of your renewal check. It should have been for $21.00. $18.00 for membership plus a $3.00 surcharge. If we have made an oversight, we will get your sample disk and catalogue out to you right away. Since we no longer have this on-going, non-attending status, members must purchase subsequent new editions of our library catalogue. Our latest catalogue, vol. 2, is now available for $2.00, which includes postage. It was done "royally" by our newsletter editor and former librarian, Bob Demeter. It is a very nice publication. It is an extention of the older catalogue; this means that you will need both in order to have a complete listing of our library. If you need one, please send your orders in, and direct them to our new librarian, Lionel Bordelon.

In a conversation with another friend and neighbor, Hal Shanafield, I found out that we have quite a few back issues of our newsletter available. Here is a list of those which we have in significant numbers: Jan. 30, 87, Feb 28, 87, Mar. 31, 87, Apr. 30, 87, May 31, 87, Oct. 31, 87, and Dec. 31, 87. We also have some of each issues for the year 1988, with the exception of December. The cost of each of these back issues is only $1.00. We also have copies of two back Super Summer Issues: Aug. 31, 86 and Aug. 31, 87. Because of their size, these issues will cost $2.00. If you order any three regular issues, we will throw in one of the above mentioned Super Summer Issues and the 1987 Faire Book.

But, anyone ordering all seven of the regular back issues will receive both Super Summer Issues free and the 1987 Faire Book. We also have a few issues of some other months. Due to their small numbers, I have not listed them, but they will be available at the November Faire. So anyone wanting a COMPLETE set of our back issues should be sure to see Hal Shanafield early on the day of the Faire. We will only have a few complete sets available, due to the small numbers of some of the issues. Also, as we are selling individual issues of MICROpendium Magazine, at each of our meetings, we now have a few back issues available of this fine publication. As our Back-issues Chairman, Hal is hanging onto these, and he will have them available at each meeting and during the Faire. The cost of each issue is $1.50 apiece.

In addition to taking care of our back issues, Hal is also in charge of our tape duplications. If you are still using a cassette tape for your storage medium, tape duplication of our programs is still available to you, but you must make sure that you see Hal Shanafield for them. (You can also write to him at P.O. Box 5788341 Chciago, Il. 60657). If you take your tape orders to the disk library, no one will know what you are talking about. We still support tape storage, but you must be sure to direct your program requests to Hal.

Since I am on the subject of Hal Shanafield, I would like to give him my most sincere thanks for his organizational efforts for our picnic this year. It was truly wonderful! It was well organized, there was plenty of food, it was well attended, the weather was good, and everyone seemed to have a very nice time. Great show Hal!!! You have just been nominated (volunteered) to organize next year's. I fully agree that since our fine BBS is on the south side, and our meetings are held on the west side, we need to have something held on the north side. Once again, thanks Hal (and Almut and Harold, and all of the others who helped to make the event a success).

I have had a few requests for individualized assistance. There have also been times when there was a problem, but I did not understand what the nature of the problem was. (Maybe the handwriting was difficult for me to decipher or I just plain couldn't understand what the point was.) In such a case, my first resort is to attempt to call the member in order to get a more detailed explanation of what the problem is. In at least three cases, when I attempted to do this, there was no telephone number for me to call. For this reason, when you renew, please make sure that we have your telephone number. If we need to talk to you, in order to help you, we will be able to make the contact easily.

"HI, HO, COME TO THE FAIRE!!!"

Yes, it's getting close to that time of the year: It is getting time for the Faire and it is getting to be time to renew.

Also relative to our Faire, there is an unconfirmed, unsubstantiated "RUMOR" that Mr. Lou Phillips, of Myarc, will be present. A lot of folks have asked what has happened to Lou at our last two Faires. I believe that the problem has been one of a severe lack of time for him. Hopefully this "RUMOR" will become an accomplished fact!

Though my Geneve Support Article is directed towards owners of a 9640, I encourage all to read it. You will find information related to the abatement of the heat problem inside the P.E.B. I hope that it will be helpful to all.

Once again, if you have any legitimate gripe, please write to me. I am now running out of things to do! If you have sent in a complaint, and it was not answered, please do not assume that I received it. If you sent in your complaint before I was elected president, there is a very good chance that I never saw your complaint. If you have sent in a letter with a problem and it was never answered, it was not received. I have responded directly, in writing to all individuals with complaints, questions, and/or problems of any kind. (Similarly, I respond directly to all calls left on the group's "hot-line" answering machine. This is definitely NOT a "FLAKE MACHINE.") Please take me up on this offer. Because of the up-coming Faire, I will not be making this offer again. I want to solve all of the problems in the group, but I must know about them first. Please give me a chance. I want our entire membership to be happy.

Have a great summer, what's left of it.

endit

Other Faires

The Mid-Atlantic Ninety Niners (MANNERS) will be having a TI International EXPO 89 show in Alexandria, Virginia on September 16, 1989. Alexandria is located outside Washington, D.C. If you are interested in attending, contact Jeff Guide at P.O. Box 244, Lorton, Virginia 22079.

FAIRE NOTE. . .

As you probably know, our annual all TI Faire is fast approaching. You may also be aware that we rent systems to those vendors who request them. In order to do this, we need our members to donate complete systems and/or monitors or televisions. This practice will again be repeated. This year, we will give three pieces of software and waive payment for your 1990 dues for use of either an expanded system or a color television or monitor. If you are able to donate both, we will give you seven pieces of software and an automatic membership renewal for 1990.

Anyone wishing to donate the use of his/her system should contact us at P.O. Box 578341 Chicago, Il. 60657. You may also leave a message on the group's bbs or our on our hot-line answering machine. Their respective numbers are (312)862-0182 and (312)869-4304. In your message, you should leave your name, address, and phone number. Also indicate that you wish to donate the use of your system. You will then receive a form to fill out. On this form, you will be asked to indicate exactly what equipment you will be donating. You will also be asked for the serial numbers of each piece, for identification purposes. When your application form is received, we will then assess our need for systems. If your system is needed, a copy of your form will be sent back to confirm our need for your system. On the day of the Faire, we request that you be present with your system by no later than 08:00 a.m. (We request that all equipment be engraved or marked with your identifying information.) If you want to drop it off the night before, we will be responsible for it, if it is left with our equipment chairman/coordinator Jan Joel Janowski. When your system is checked in, we will indicate exactly which vendor will be using your system. This will simplify the problem of responsibility for the condition of the system. At the end of the Faire, you are to report to the vendor who has your system. It will be returned to you, and your application form will be validated by our coordinator, Jan Janowski. You may then use your validated form as a voucher to receive your free software from our library and also for a free membership dues credit for 1990.

This is a very important service which the group performs relative to the execution of the Faire. We desperately need the cooperation of our members. We also stress that we will indemnify all donors for any loses relative to lost, damaged, and/or stolen equipment, whose use is donated to our Faire.

If you have any questions relative to this, please address your correspondence to Jan Joel Janowski, in care of our post office box number. You may also leave a message on our hot-line, and we will get back to you.

GENEVE SUPPORT ARTICLE...

Howdy doody there, sports fans!!! I hope that the summer is treating you all well. I also hope that your Genny is keeping cool.

Speaking ot summer and heat, it should be clear to all of you that heat is probably the biggest problem that electronic devices can experience. Heat definitely causes problems, and it can shorten the life of virtually any electronic component. Because this is a most timely subject, let's discuss some of the things that we can do to solve this problem:

My first suggestion is to not sandwich Genny between two cards; I mean that Genny should not be in a slot with other cards in the nearest, adjacent, left and right slots. The reason for this is that Genny generates a little more heat than most regular 4A cards, and it it is sitting directly next to another card, the heat from that card with the heat from the Genny may cause a little more heat to build up than you may want. The simple reason for this heat build-up is that Genny has more chips on its board than any of the older 4A cards, and having more chips requires the use of more voltage regulators; it's the voltage regulators that generate the heat. (In general, most newer, state of the art electronic equipment tends to generate more heat than the older equipment because of the presence of a greater number of chips, and these chips are also performing more functions than ever before.) Therefore, if possible, I would suggest that there be an open slot on either side of Genny, and I suggest that you place on either side of Genny a couple of strips of the insulation that is used between the sashes of a double-hung window, that is holding a window mounted air conditioner. (A roll of this will usually be less than $2.00.) I am suggesting that you place these two strips in each of the spaces on either side of your Genny; one should be covering the holes in the rear wall of the space, and the other should be covering the holes in the front wall of the space. How many of you sports fans even know what these holes are for???

In order to understand the function of the holes in the front (inner) and the rear (inner and outer) walls of the P.E.B., you need to take a look at the "clam shell" cover on any of your TI, CorComp, or Myarc peripheral expansion box cards. You will notice a series of matching holes on both the front and the rear edges of these cards. These holes match up with the holes in the P.E.B., and it is through these holes that air is supposed to flow. Though your fan is pushing air out of the rear of your, P.E.B., on the left side, where the fan and the power supply are located, it is also pulling air in

from the rear of the P.E.B., directly behind the area where your cards are placed, and it is through the holes in the rear of your box that air is supposed to enter. This air then passes through the holes of the rear of the "clam shell" cover of the card in the slot and out the holes at the front end of the card. The air then passes through the holes in the inside panel, of the front end of the P.E.B., and makes a turn to the left side of the P.E.B. to where the power supply and fan are. The fan then pulls the air through its blades and pushes the heated air out of the box. This cooling system is rather efficient, but it has certain limitations, due to design oversights.

First, it will not work properly if the lid of the P.E.B. is not in place. This is clearly because the path for the flow of air, that is being sucked in through the rear, is broken, and all that will happen will be that the air will pass in through the holes in the front inner panel of the P.E.B. Without the lid on, there is no compelling reason for the air to pass through the rear of the P.E.B., UNLESS there is a card, in a "clam shell" cover, in EVERY slot! (Pay attention to this last item, sports fans, as it leads to the second limitation to the P.E.B.'s cooling system.) The second limitation is that unless there is a card in every slot, a great deal of the air coming in from the rear will take the path of least resistance and pass through the holes where there is NO card sitting. So, if you don't have a card in every slot, inside a "clam shell" cover, you can either, 1.) put tape over the holes where there is no card, or 2.) you can put in a piece of the air conditioner window insulation, that I mentioned above. The whole purpose of doing either of these two things is to force the air to pass only through the holes where there is a card sitting. I am doing this in my own system, and it does make a difference. BTW, the idea is one that I got from my good friend, Hank Ellermann. It was also from Hank that I learned to use a pencil point to grab the lower end of the insulation and push/pull it down and into place. THANKX, HANKX!!!

As long as there are empty spaces in your P.E.B., you can utilize the above idea. But when you have a "FULL METAL BOX" (NOT a "Full Metal Jacket"), then you are going to have do more to keep your box and cards cool.

A FULL METAL (P.E.) BOX??? Has Krome Dome Flipped his shiny, slick wig??? No I haven't. In fact, many of us are fast approaching that point already. Here is a system configuration that I personally know exists: a.) a Genny, b.) a TI RS232 card, c.) a modified Myarc 512K memory/RAM card, d.) a Horizon RAM disk, e.) a Myarc HFDC card, f.) a Rave speech card, and g.) a TI FDC card. As you can see, this system has seven cards in eight slots. Now, if the owner of this system had a second RS232 or HRD, then all of the slots would be full! Happily, we can look forward to a few new

cards and upgrades that will solve part of the problem.

One new card that we can look forward to is a "utility" card from Myarc. This card would have the potential to contain a MIDI, a math co-processor, a speech chip, and maybe more. (And as it is now possible to put a MODEM on a chip, I really do hope that Myarc will jump onto this idea and consider placing a MODEM on this board.) This would then eliminate the need for the RAVE speech card, but, until then, the RAVE speech card is a very useful card, if you want to retain your speech capability with your Genny. The upgrade that I was thinking of is the "H" version of MDOS version 1.15. When that version is released, the DSR's, for controlling a floppy disk drive, from the Myarc HFDC, will be present. This means that we won't need to use another FDC card to control our floppy drives with the HFDC. (If you are using a 4A, with a HFDC, the DSR's are already present in the computer, and it is now possible to use the HFDC for all computer operations with the 4A.) So, unless you need to have more than four floppy disk drives active, there will be no need to keep another FDC card in the box. (I will deal with my on-going saga to get my hard drive going a little later.)

Let us return to what we can do to keep our system's cool: My next bit of advice is somewhat obvious, but it does make a difference during hot weather: Keep your P.E.B. is a cool and open place. If you can place it in a room with an air conditioner, it will really make a difference. If not, it will help to direct a fan towards the back of the P.E.B. or towards the wall that the rear of the P.E.B. is facing. You don't want for heat pockets to develop in the room on a very hot day: keep the air moving. And definitely keep the back of your P.E.B. open and free from clutter as that is where the air to be circulated is both sucked in and blown out of the general area.

You may remember that in an earlier article, I suggested the replacement of the fan, that comes inside of the P.E.B. with a quieter Rotron "muffin" fan. Well, I guess that I have to eat a little crow and admit that with all of the cards that I have in my box, at this time, though the fan is very quiet, it does not seem to move enough air across the cards in the box. (At the same time, I still feel that the replacement "muffin" fan will still work well IF you don't have many cards in your P.E.B. If you are running a 4A with only a FDC, a RS232, a 32K memory card, an expansion card, and any number of HRD's, then you may experience no problems.) For this reason, I have returned the original fan to my P.E.B, but I have not discarded my "muffin" fan. Rather, I have mounted the quieter "muffin" fan to the outside, rear of my P.E.B., directly behind the vent holes for the interior fan, and it is placed so that it is blowing in the same direction as the inside fan. It is therefore helping the situation by pulling air out the box and thereby making the cooling system

more efficient. Also, in order to keep the noise down, I have placed the internal fan on a variable speed control: a light dimmer switch will also work. (This is another idea which I have learned from my good friend, Hank Ellermann. THANKX, HANKX!!!) When the ambient temperature of the room holding the computer is moderately low, I keep the fan as slow and quiet as I can without letting the cards get too warm. If the cards start to warm up, I just simply increase the fan speed and the efficiency of the cooling system. With the out-board "muffin" fan also sucking air in I am am able to run my system virtually all day long without the crashes that I was experiencing earlier.

Here, I might also mention that when you do start to run out of slots, so that you have cards in all of the slots on either side of Genny, you can do the following: Make sure that the cards surrounding your Genny are cards that run cooler rather than warmer. I have found that the TI RS232 card tends to run rather warm most of the time, but the TI FDC card tends to run cooler. You can check out which cards run cooler by turning your system off, after it has been been running for a few hours. Be sure to first wait the required 2 minutes, and then take off the top of your P.E.B. You can then determine which cards run warmer and which are cooler by merely feeling the tops of the cards. You don't even have to remove them from their slots in the box. Now, let's us talk about what we can do to help dissipate the heat that will enevitably build up on each card:

My next trick required some technical expertise, which I sorely lack, so I turned to my good friend and associate, Jan Joel Janowski ("Mr. 3J" of the portable 4A project fame). I brought to Jan the metal "clam shells" that were on cards that I am no longer using. We then removed my Genny and HFDC card from their plastic "clam shells" and installed them inside of metal ones. This meant putting electrician's tape around the part that extends outside of the "clam shell" and grinding down a couple of points inside so that they will not short out against the cards. This last part is important, and for this reason, I cannot recommend that the user lacking sufficient technical skills attempt this shell modification. You need to grind down some of the protruding studs, but not to the extent that there is insufficient support for the card in the shell: it is a tricky but important consideration. Some of the other studs must be merely insulated with tape and allowed to remain as they provide support for the card in the shell. (This idea is one that I learned from my good friend and associate, Don Walden, the president of the Milwaukee Users' Group and the Wisconsin TI Council. Thanks for your help and ideas, Don!)

Before I leave this subject, I must mention one other rather severe system modification that some members have undertaken with good results: My above mentioned friend, Hank Ellermann,

has undertaken an experiment that few others have copied, but those who have say that it works well. What Hank has done is to lower the voltage of the power that the cards in the P.E.B. receive. In order to do this, Hank has connected a good quality light dimmer switch to the transformer of the power supply of the P.E.B. He then would lower the voltage to a point where the cards are all running cooler, but the system is still working flawlessly. If he would lower the voltage too much, the system would crash or disk drives would turn on without commands for them to do so. Another advantage of this system is that the fan in his P.E.B. is going slower and quieter. Though I have not tried this method out, it seems to work, as Hank is running his great bbs (The Chicago Connection) from this P.E.B., and it is running 24 hours a day! (There are two other advantages that Hank has which should not be ignored: a.) he is running his board from his basement, where it is cooler than the rest of his house, and b.) he doesn't have a Genny inside his P.E.B. Rather, he is using his beloved 4A. I don't know what would happen to a Genny if it were put into a box where the voltage had beeen lowered.) Hank is also using a Myarc HFDC card to control the 20 meg. hard drive that he is now running his board from.

I mentioned above about my saga to get my hard drive going. Now for a few details about this newest and latest challenge: I received my Myarc HFDC card from my dealer, Mr. Big Bob Demeter, of Lake Computer Depot. (Big Bob is also the source of my Genny.) I then ordered a hard drive from a company that advertises in Computer Shopper Magazine. Knowing full well that we are unable to use a RLL (Run Length Limited) drive to its fullest capacity, I chose a drive that was clearly indicated to be a MFM drive, as this is the only kind of drive that we in the 4A/9640 community can presently use. I mentioned around that I wanted to invest in a 40 meg. hard drive. The drive that was recommended to me was the Segate ST 251-1. This is a 40 meg. drive that operates at a fast 28 milliseconds. I expected to experience no problems whatsoever, but, alas, this was not to be. The drive came in good condition and very quickly, but when I installed it, I found that I was unable to format it, using the MDMV (version 1.29) software; I just couldn't figure out what the problem was. The only thing that I could even begin to guess was that maybe I received a defective drive. I even considered trying to format it in a "klone," just to verify that it was working, but, fortunately, I never got that far. On an outside hunch, I called Jack Riley of Myarc. I did this because I had heard quite a few stories of how Jack got friends of mine going with their HFDC's, so feeling somewhat embarassed over my lack of technical expertise, I called Jack in Birmingham. I was unable to speak to Jack as he was not present, but his wife proved to be both knowledgeable and helpful. She then began to ask me some questions in order to try to determine what the nature of my problem was. She

finally asked me what drive I was using, and I told her. Her immediate response was that the Segate 251-1 was a drive with which there are "some compatibility problems." I was really quite shocked, as I thought that any MFM drive would work. As a result of our conversation, I called the company from which I had ordered the hard drive. I explained to them my problem, received a R.M.A. (Return Merchandise Authorization) number, and ordered a Miniscribe 3053, which Mrs. Riley had recommended as being a good 40 meg. drive which would give me no problems.

Two days later, I called Jack again as I needed to know exactly what the problem was. I felt a strong need to be able to document this problem here in this article. Fortunately, this time Jack was in, and I had a most enlightening conversation. What I found out was this: The Seagate 151 and 151-1 hard drives have proven to be totally reliable and compatible with the HFDC card. Jack did not claim that there have never been any problems with either of these two 40 meg. drives, rather he said that Myarc was unaware of any problems with these drives, as they had never received any complaints from the many people who are using them with the HFDC. Regarding the ST 251, they have found that there is a 3 out of 4 chance that they will not work. In the case of the ST 251-1, they have found that there is a 50% chance that this drive will not work. The reason why some of these drives will work and why others, of the same brand and model will not work is an enigma to all. A considerable number of HFDC card users have purchased either a Seagate ST 251 or ST 251-1 hard drive and have had NO problems of any sort with their drive. Others, such as myself, have been unable to get these drives to work at all. The apparent problem is that though the drives are supposed to be the same, there are differences which are not clearly discerned. Though the general overall design is the same, there is still a difference within the range of drives marked as ST 251 and ST 251-1. The difference may be a subtle design difference, that exists between different factories, or it may be a component difference. (An associate of mine indicated that a recent article in Computer Shopper Magazine alleged that there has been a lapse in the quality control of the Segate product in recent years.) Whatever the difference is, no one has been able to figure it out. Lou Phillips is aware of the problem, and he has attempted to find a solution to the problem, but to no avail. As Lou's time is very scarce and very valuable, he was forced to give up on attempting to find a solution. The best advice or solution that I can offer to the user of the HFDC card is to avoid the Seagate ST 251 or ST 251-1 UNLESS you are able to attempt to format this drive, with a HFDC BEFORE you purchase it. If the drive works the first time, it will probably work flawlessly until the day that it wears out. (Yes, sports fans, hard drives do eventually wear out. NOTHING is forever.) If it doesn't work initially, it

probably won't work at all. If you want a 40 meg. drive, the Seagate ST 151 and ST 151-1 appear to be totally reliable and compatible. If you are looking for a 40 meg., fast access time drive, seek out a Miniscribe 3053. This 40 meg. drive has a 25 millisecond access time, and it does not use the older "stepper motor" technology, and all drives of this type seem to work flawlessly with the HFDC card. I might also mention that Jack said that other computers, with their compatible controller cards, have experienced similar problems. In other words, no controller ever built is compatible with all models of all manufacturers of hard disk drives.

There is one last thing that I would caution the purchaser of a hard drive to do: Make sure that the distributor or seller who you purchase your drive from is reputable and will stand behind whatever they sell you. I say this because of the fine manner in which I was dealt with by Quick Electronics, Inc. I ordered the drive on a Wednesday evening. They said that I would receive it by U.P.S. in about 5 working days. Instead, I received it that next Monday. When I had the compatibility problem, all that I had to do was to call their technical assistance department. I was quick, easily, and courteously issued a R.M.A. (Return Merchandise Authorization) number and allowed to order a replacement for the drive which I was to return. For these reasons, I can easily recommend this fine firm for the purchase of hard drives. Their address is 7381 114th Avenue N. #403B, Largo, Florida 34643. Their sales department phone number is 1(800)338-4072. They are fast, reliable, courteous, and knowledgeable. I don't feel that one could reasonably ask for more from any seller of computer perpherials.

For an abrupt change of subject, I would like to mention that I have found that the fine Asgard program, Beyond Video Chess will not work on a Genny. I received a letter from Chris Bobbitt to this effect, and though I purchased this program at our last Faire, Chris has accepted it back for a cheerful refund. (I ended up exchanging this program for another piece of software named Pro Page 99. I will be doing a review on this new text/graphic program in the very near future.) Relative to other software that I have been trying out, I have found a limitation in the program Quick Format; it will only work with disks in drive "A". This is too bad as it is a simple cheap, fast and reliable way to format a disk drive. My problem is that may drive "A" is a 3.5 inch drive while my 5.25 inch drives are drives "C" and "D". I will experiment to see if I can do something to allow this program to read other drives. Due to space limitations, I will attempt to discuss some of the other fine software that is now available for the Geneve, in my next article. It seems that most of this article has been devoted to hardware problems and concerns. Now for this months installment of my AUTOEXEC file:

It looks like Krome Dome is gonna have ta eat a little more crow, and here is the reason why: I found that I had an error in the AUTOEXEC file that I have been building here in this article. Do you remember that in the first installment of this file, I suggested that your second line be: "GPL"? Well, folks, that line is completely unnecessary. There is no such command, and when Genny sees it, all that she will try to do is find a file with that name and load it from drive "A", and if it isn't there, you will get an error message. And though I did not mention it in my last article, you MUST use the "LASTDRIVE" command before your "ASSIGN" commands. If you don't it just won't work. Now, let's see what kind of an AUTOEXEC file we have to work with:

```
TI MODE
RAMDISK 120
LASTDRIVE = L
ASSIGN E=DSK5:
ASSIGN F=DSK6:
ASSIGN G=hdS1:
```

Now that this much is correct, let's add something new:

```
VER
```

This command will cause Genny to indicate the version of M-DOS that is being used by the system at that time. Let's also add another couple of commands:

```
TIME
DATE
```

When Genny sees these commands, she will stop what she is doing and prompt you with the current settings for these parameters and wait for you to change them. If you agree with the current settings, you will need only to hit "Enter" when prompt occurs.

Well, I think that that's about as far as I should go today. Next month I want to talk about some of the fine software that I am using. In fact, I find that there is darn little of the older software that I want or need to run that I am not able to run. A lot of the problems that I was having with getting some older stuff to run was due to my lack of expertise, but that too is changing. Well, until next time keep on having a nice summer. I'll see you in September, but until then,

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FOUR-A/TALK

Random ramblings
about things TI.

by Bill Gaskill

July 1989

AN OPINION ON OUR
FUTURE

WHAT'S HOT:

Barry Boone's new EPROM for the Mechatronics 80-column card, AV-Indexer from Genial Computerware, a promised upgrade to 99 FORTRAN by Al Beard, MY-WORD Externals from J. Peter Hoddie, cSHELL99 from Joe Ross and GENIEINDEX from Scott Darling.

NEWS:

Geneve 9640 users will be happy to hear that Peter Hoddie has created a way to add new commands and keypresses to the current version of MY-WORD. I don't have any more details on it other than to report that a demo External and documentation are available for downloading from DELPHI's TINET SIG.

Al Beard, Professor Emeritus of the Fortran language for our two 9900 series computers, has promised an upgrade of 99 FORTRAN to V4.0 to help it keep up with the immensely popular 9640 FORTRAN that seems to have taken over c99's spotlight (at least for now) as the developer's language of choice for the 9640.

Barry Boone, guru of DSR's for the 99/4A and the author of the best archiving utility in existence in my opinion (for any computer), has announced a $20.00 EPROM for the Mechatronics 80-column card that contains fixes for the bugs that apparently existed in the original EPROM. There are several other enhancements to the card too, including the ability to use any CRU base so that ram disks can be used with it and an 80-column version of John Johnson's Menu V7.3 for the Horizon Ram Disk, to prove it. Cost is $20.00 plus $2.00 for S/H. Write or call Barry at:

Barry Boone
Box 1233
Sand Springs, Ok.
74063
918-356-4648 8am-10pm weekdays.
10am-10pm weekends.

Don and Aaron West have authored a new program called AV-INDEXER that will print labels for cassettes and VCR tapes. It also provides some indexing capabilities and can import files from Asgard's Cassette Labeler. It is available through Genial Computerware for $15. Write to Genial at;

Genial Computerware
Box 183
Gratton, Ma.
01519

Joe Ross, a here-to-for unknown programmer (to me at least) has created a REALLY slick looking product called cSHELL99, which is designed to provide a GEOS-like front end for the 99/4A. In case you didn't know already, GEOS (Graphics Environment Operating System) is an icon-based add-in for the Commodore 64/128 line of computers that looks and acts like the user interface that comes standard with an Apple Macintosh.

cSHELL is written in c99 and assembly and it gives the user the ability to point at icons (little pictures, like a trash can) to provide various disk management and printer functions. It also provides loaders for files that can be loaded with the Editor/Assembler module's option 3 and option 5, and it allows you to link to c99 programs so that the cSHELL99 interface is reloaded upon exiting. The graphics on the program are superlative and program performance is quick and efficient. I hope to have more information on cSHELL after I get more time to spend with it. Although I have yet to really get into the program, it looks NEAT!!! Program cost is $30.00, which includes S/H. That buys you two flippy disks and a 48 page manual. If you are interested, send your inquiries to:

Joe Ross
119 Knollwood Terrace
Clifton, N.J. 07012

DISCOVERIES:

Word is that Warren Agee is readying the next version of FirstBase and Genial Computerware is looking for suggestions from users on new features that they would like to see in it. You may write to Peter Hoddie at the Genial Computerware address with your suggestions.

J. Peter Hoddie has been working on a program tentatively named Sign Shop, that will operate like Broderbund's Print Shop for Apple and IBM type computers. JPH also intimated that he hopes to produce a Navarone to FirstBase conversion program to allow owners of the Navarone DBMS to port their data files over to FirstBase format.

Scott Darling, one of GEnie's TI-SIG hosts, has uploaded a neat file to the TI RoundTable that lists a ton (if not all) of the products and services available on GEnie. The file un-arc's to 359 sectors and prints out to 39 pages of information. If you are a GEnie subscriber and want to have a quick source for what GEnie has to offer, this is the file to spend your downloading dollars on. It covers everything from games to on-line shopping, with excellent descriptions of each product or service. If your club receives Four-A/Talk from me directly, the file should be available from your librarian. A TI-Base adaptation of the the short-list of GEnie's products is also available from your librarian as a shareware offering. I ask $7 for a copy of it. I think that you will find it to be one of the best TI-Base command file programming examples around. It covers menu creation, and offers features to add, browse, change, find, list, report on and search for data. It also provides a command file to print a disk label for the diskette that you store the file on. I think TI-Base owners will like it.

VIEWS:

-Opinions expressed in the following article are those of the author and do not necessarily represent my ideas or opinions in the area(s)

discussed.

WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

FUTURE SPECULATIONS

By Steve Mickelson, 9T9 Users Group
Compuserve 76545,1255; Delphi SMICKELSON; GEnie S.Mickelson

As the second anniversary of the production model 9640 approaches, one can exercise some interesting speculation as to the future of Myarc is concerned. All that's required is an open mind and vivid imagination.

As with most computer manufacturers are concerned, the direction of product development and marketing plans are both driving and driven by the demands/needs of the market place. Apple, as an example, started as one of several companies in the market place, who eventually created their own niche in the market place to dominate; namely in the desktop publishing field. Today Apple enjoys the pleasant position of both generating and taking-care of the needs of their users.

With other models, their niche is not so clear and Myarc's approach of using an operating system, M-DOS, with the same instruction set as MS-DOS can be advantageous and a liability, at the same time. True MS-DOS was patterned after the CP/M operating system and provided a familiar feeling to users who changed from one system, to another, history does not necessarily repeat itself. Witness, the relatively few converts who moved up to OS/2, from MS-DOS. Besides, if a person were inclined to go the way of MS-DOS, wouldn't it seem logical that instead of buying a Geneve, they would buy a clone?

Granted, there is enough similarity that a user with an IBM or clone at work, could easily run a 9640, from MS-DOS. But the relative lack of software for the 9640, compared to the IBM world is a distinct disadvantage.

A mouse-driven "GEM-like" operating system would seem a better way to go, as the 9938 mouse and its VDP RAM could easily contain an instruction set of micos which could be selected by mouse, thus freeing the CPU for other tasks, or should I say multitasks.

The preference towards more simplified "non-technical" oriented operating systems seems to be the way to go, witness the popularity of Windows in the world of Big Blue. I digress too much back to the speculation as to where Myarc is leading/following.

As far as new hardware/software is concerned, Myarc is the manufacturing leader of new hardware. While the standard memory expansion card and disk controller cards have captured their share of the TI market place, the 9640 and Hard Floppy Disk Controllers, especially the HFDC, have created a significant market within a market. All new software, generally must address the compatibility "problem" with the 9640 and the HFDC. Here the hardware has impacted upon the software. So where do we go from here?

If we follow the development of the 9640, we must go back to 1983, when Myarc as a supply arm of TI had produced around 150 TI-99/8, when TI pulled-out of the market place, officially at least.

The large base of users still hoped for and expected someone to pick up

the torch and produce the upgrade. The 9640 went through many changes, appearing in some TI publications as a stand-alone suspiciously similar to the 99/8. The discontinuation of the 9918 video chip by Ti, along with the the trend towards larger RAM, than the 64K in the 99/8, delayed the introduction and drove up the costs of production. The memory jumped to 128K, then 256K and finally 512K. The need for a replacement video chip was answered by the Yamaha's advanced 9938 chip. To keep costs down, the computer evolved into a P-Box card, using an IBM style keyboard. This innovation led to the emergence of companies like RAVE, which make keyboard interfaces for 99/4A users.

Many of the bugs of the 9640 were resolved through the Myarc RAMdisk/expansion memory card, which had a "TI" version of 9640 Advance BASIC. This card was originally designed to work with the 9640 and as Lou Phillips had put it, the card was re-wired for the 99/4A. So the TI users beta tested both the memory expansion and Advance BASIC for the 9640. This kept costs down and helped promote compatibility between the 99/4A and 9640.

The 9640 is out and some final verson of software packages are nearing completion. Where to now?

A couple of years ago, an interesting prototype was shown at the Chicago TI Fair, namely a 9640 incorporated into a Sony monitor with built-in 3-1/2" disk drive. Last fall, a non-functioning Myarc expansion system made its appearance at Chicago.. Both of these systems point towards a stand-alone 9640, much like the original concept that embodied this computer.

Interviews from Compuserve, Delphi and in MICROpendium indicate that the 8-bit data bus in the P-Box limits the speed and memory capacity of the 9640,(which is about two Megabytes in its present form). Also, prototypes of a "new" 9640, with a 20 MHz clock reveal more of what may come. The upgrading of the 0-wait state RAM for the CPU from 32K to 64K enables the 9640 to conceivably jump to a new GPL speed of 6.

The CorComp microexpansion system shows just how small a memory, RS-232, and disk controller could be made five years ago, so imagine what could be made today! Lou mentioned to me that a small extension to the 9640 could be made to provide for a RS-232 cum parallel printer port.

Lets put the pieces of the puzzle together and see what we could have; a stand alone super Geneve with 20 MHz,(I've heard that you could almost double the clock speed to 40), minimum of 2 Megabytes expandible to a full 16 Megabytes, with both a Hard/Floppy controller, with the same hi-res graphics and mouse capabilities as the 9640. This computer would have a minimum 16-bit databus, and super fast 0-wait memory cache'. It wouldn't be TI compatible, but would be able to run the M-DOS software, Run time Pascal, Advance BASIC, GEME, etc. or a modified version of this software.

So we know what the next step of the 9640 evolution would look like, based on the evidence of the past, just who would buy such a unit and how would it be marketed?

Again we have some clues, but here not so clearly hinted. It has been mentioned that the new multifunction card will have a Yamaha music chip on the MIDI interface, as Myarc "has a good relationship with Myarc", having produced the 9938 video chip for the 9640. From this, a conceivable scenario could be of a stand alone 9640, running a software

based Z-80 simulator,(much like the one Jim Bullentine developed and had running on a 9640), running as the GPL interpreter simulates the 99/4A. But, here the Z-80 simulator on this super Geneve would provide an upgrade for the Japanese MSX2 computers, which use the same 9938 video chip.

Myarc, could conceivably agree to have Yamaha and other Japanese MSX2 manufacturers produce under license Geneve overseas in high quantities for both their domestic and our markets, eventually both users weaned off of their respective GPL or Z-80 environment to one which uses the full power of the Geneve's native environment?

Who could be behind such a plan to capture two segments of the world computing market, in a "back door way"? Possibly Myarc's original patron Texas Instruments! So much for the power of a vivid imagination. The next few years reveal how accurate are such deduced speculations.

This Month in TI-99/4A History:

1981:

Proposal is made in fourth issue of the TIHOME Tidings magazine to set TIHOME up as a recognized Users Group by Texas Instruments.

1983

Anteater game module released.

-First issue of TI*MES is published by Britain Clive Scally.

1984:

JOYPRINT, a printer interface that is designed to work out of the joystick port, is released by Model Masters.

-Impending publication of the Super 99 Monthly magazine is announced by editor Richard Mitchell.

-Article appears in Popular Computing that derides TI and its non-standard 16 bit chip, citing the failure of the TI- 99/4A as an example.

-QUICK COPYER is released by Quality 99 Software.

-TINY LOGO released for the 99/4A.

-WILD WOODS game program by JW Software debuts.

1985:

FUNNEL WRITER 2.1 arrives in the U.S., introducing the Australian programmers Tony and Will McGovern to the American TI-99/4A Community.

-Myarc announces XB II for use with its new Ram Disk.

-Navarone Industries announces its ill- fated HYWAY (Have it Your Way) program.

-TI-99/4A Users Association of Canada is formed with Jane LaFlamme as

contact person for membership interest.

-Steve Lawless, author of MASSCOPY, has a new program available: 128-WRITER. It stores the TIW editor and formatter in bank 3 of the FOUNDATION 128K card.

1986:

Rave add-on keyboard announced for the 99/4A.

1987:

MICROpendium publishes the history of Disk Manager 1000.

-Federal Communications Commission plan to tax on-line communications services is announced.

-Ralph Fowler announces that his TIBBS, the first bulletin board system for the 99/4A, will shut down for lack of use.

1988:

Bill Knecht, pioneer member of the TI-HUG (Houston Texas Users Group) and long time programmer of music for the 99/4A, dies of cancer.

-McCann Software, Omaha, Nebraska, releases the Avanti-99 Forth card for the 99/4A PE Box.

-Rave99 releases the MX01 Memory Enhancement System, which is a ram disk card capable of being configured to store up to 544K.

-Texaments, a New York based supplier of 99/4A products, relocates to Yaphank New York 11980, 244 Mill Road.

-John Cuion, Dallas, Texas releases a plug in upgrade to the Triton/MG Super Extended Basic module that provides SXB, Disk Manager III, Editor/Assembler and TI-Writer capabilities in one module.

-Sierra On-Line, former producer of 99/4A game modules such as Jawbreaker, publically announces it will not enforce its 99/4A copyrights.

-John Birdwell begins assembly language programming series for MICROPENDIUM. He decides to teach the language by making each published installment one part of a working word processor when complete.

-Ray Kazmer, 13225 Azores Ave. Sylmar, Cal. 91342, becomes the first person in the history of MICROpendium magazine to have two articles, one review, one User Notes and a letter all published in the same issue.

TRIVIA:

Did you know that...

-Stephen Flanagan, the author of Data Base 1, marketed quite successfully by SPC Software out of Brightwaters, New York, is now doing his programming on the Commodore Amiga?

-Chicago TI-UG members Roger and Orlan Degris created a "49-99" keyboard for the 4A in 1985 that had a second function key? The additional key was built onto the existing 48-key board just to the left of the letter A. Sort of a compliment to the <ENTER> key in the same position on the right side of the board. I remember actually seeing one at the '86 Fest-West.

-John Keown, creator of the Module Emulator that was primarily marketed through Pilgrim's Pride in Philadelphia, is credited with giving Myarc's computer on a card the "Geneve" name? The name apparently came from a framed print that was hanging on a wall in Lou Phillips' place. Lou gave the computer the 9640 designation, the 9 coming from the 9900 series chip that the computer is based on and the 640 coming from the size of the RAM that it comes with.

-Texas Instruments had a promotional policy in effect that offered a free "Teach Yourself Basic" cassette to 99/4A purchasers? I haven't been able to discover when it ended, but it was still in effect in May of 1984 for those who had proof of purchase prior to October 31, 1983.

-The famous random number generator benchmark that compared the 99/4A to Apple, IBM and Osborne I computers (and that showed it outperforming them) appeared in an article in the July-August '84 issue of Interfaces Magazine, pages 81-87? The article was authored by D.T. Modianos, R. Scott and L.W. Cornwell.

-Another obscure article on the 99/4A appeared in the Journal of Computers in Math and Science Teaching, in the Fall of 1983, that discussed 99/4A computers as science lab instruments. The article appeared on page 28 and was authored by Frederick Thomas.

-While supporting the TI Community, Navarone Industries moved from one address in Sunnyvale, California to another one, then to Sonora, California, then to Texas, back to California and ultimately back to Texas again? (whew!)

Until next time...

FOUR-A/TALK

Random ramblings
about things TI.

by Bill Gaskill

August 1989

A HOT SUMMER IN THE
99/4A and 9640 COMMUNITY

WHAT'S HOT:

PPDNU (Page Pro Device Name Utility), COLUMNTEXT, TI-SORT and THE BUGGER.

DISCOVERIES:

-Inscebot Inc. has released the commercial version of TI-SORT. It contains all of the features mentioned in a previous Four-A/Talk

column, but now has some of the neatest "windows" you have ever seen for on-screen help. It loads quickly and has performed flawlessly. If you don't have it, you WILL want it. The program sorts almost any kind of file, in ascending or descending order, by multiple fields. It also makes sorting a TI-Base file a "dream". Grab it! For $14.95 plus $2.50 shipping and handling, you can't go wrong.

Inscebot Inc.
P.O. Box 291610
Port Orange, Fl. 32029

-Richard W. Lauhead, a member of the Minneapolis/St. Paul 99ers, has written a neat assembly language coded utility to convert disk/path names on a floppy or ram disk to other paths/names. The program was originally written to convert Ed Johnson's Page Pro 99 so that it would run from a hard drive, but according to the author, the program will work on any application, not just Page Pro. The utility may be ordered from Richard or downloaded from GEnie and probably the other major on-line information services by now. The program is not Fairware, but Richard wouldn't turn down any donations that you care to send. Here's a short explanation of the program from him;

"Page Pro 99 Device Name Utility is a utility program I wrote to convert all the device names on the Page Pro example disk from DSK1 to WDS1.PAGEPRO (the directory on my hard disk where I put all the examples). This allowed me to load all the example pages without getting I/O errors, or having to use the method detailed in the manual for getting around this problem. I also used it on the three program files to convert all the default DSK1 prompts to WDS1.PAGEPRO prompts. The utility is really very simple. It reads each sector of the disk on the drive you specify and searches for the string DSK1. If it finds the string, it replaces it with the device name you specify, and corrects the device/file length byte. The program uses low level disk controller sector read/write routines. It has been tested on a CorComp controller on the Geneve, a Horizon RAM disk on the Geneve and a TI controller on the TI99/4A, but it should work on any controller. It has not been tested on the hard disk controller."

Richard's address is;

Richard W. Lauhead
3985 Clover Ave.
St. Paul, Mn. 55127

-Ron Prewitt, a member of the Tacoma 99ers, has released version 4.1 of Columntext and version 3.1 of MarginText. Both are companion programs designed to produce columnized output of DV/80 files. Both programs are menu driven and almost don't need any documentation to figure out. If you want to spruce up the appearance of your newsletter, this may be the package for you. Ron asks a paltry $5.00 for his efforts. You may write to him at;

Ron Prewitt
6429 South Fife
Tacoma, Wa. 98409

-Mike McCasline has compiled a listing of over 200 TI-99 Bulletin Board Systems around the country. I don't know if Mike is interested in sharing the list or not, but a couple of dollars might help sway him if

you are interested. Mike's address is:

Mike McCasline
Box 885
Monrovia, Ca. 91016

NEWS:

-The official "final" version of Advanced Basic for the Geneve was released June 30th. It may be downloaded from GEnie in either one arc'd file (#3330) or as 7 un-arc'd files.

-MDOS version .95H for the Myarc Hard Disk was released on June 6th by Lou Phillips. It may be downloaded from GEnie. It is recommended that you download the un-arc'd version, apparently because of a "possible" problem with the compression of the file when it is archived. Both versions are available for download. The un-arc'd version is file #3299.

-As of July 15th, the word is that the most recent version of MYWORD for the Geneve will be the last one produced. Apparently since Peter Hoddie has moved to the Silicon Valley area of California he is no longer working for Myarc. Paul Charlton, who at last report was working in the Boulder or Fort Collins, Colorado area, is still working for Myarc. More good things to come I hope.

-A rumor is circulating that John Johnson will take over as sysop for the TI RoundTable on GEnie and that Scott Darling, who took over from Mark Sumner, way back when the TI RoundTable was first formed, will move on to "other" things.

-Another rumor I picked up is that Norm Sellers, master of music fairware, is nearing completion on a new assembly language coded utility for the 99/4A. Although I don't have a name for it, the program supposedly will read disk files and tell you virtually anything that there is to know about the files. A real "Innermost Secrets" type application.

-Ernie Pergrem, the Educational Program Chairman for the Chicago TI Users Group, has undertaken a project to put together a 20-25 page booklet of non-copyrighted articles from other newsletters? It will be patterned after the very successful Hardware Projects Manual that the Chicago Group produced via Nick Iacovelli et al.

-Tom Freeman and Jim Lohmeyer of T and J Software have announced the release of THE BUGGER, an assembly language debugger that sends output to the RS232 port to avoid corrupting the program being debugged. The program lacks print routines at this point apparently, but will have them included as soon as the necessary code for "all" RS232 cards is available. THE BUGGER is available for $18.50 (which includes S/H) from:

T and J Software
515 Alma Real Drive
Pacific Palisades, Cal.
90272

-Barry Traver has uploaded over 15 files of public domain graphics data files (that contain pictures) that can be used with a program called TIPS, by Ron Wolcott, to convert the pictures to TI-Artist Instances.

As soon as I locate Ron's address I will let you know. I also haven't been able to find the TIPS program either.

-Comprodine's Roger Merritt and TexComp's Jerry Price have apparently entered into an agreement whereby the giant distributor of TI-99/4A products will handle Comprodine software. On a similar note, Paul Coleman, author of GAP (Giant Artist Posters) and the NameLoc line of software, is apparently now lending his programming skills to the Comprodine line of innovative products. Look for great things to come!

Comprodine
1949 Evergreen Ave.
Fullerton, Ca. 92635
714-990-4577 (12-5 PST)

TexComp Users Supply
P.O. Box 33084
Granada Hills, Ca. 91344
818-366-6631 (24 hr. order line)

THIS MONTH IN TI-99 HISTORY:

<1979>

According to Interface Age magazine the first modules to be produced for the new TI-99/4 will include: Connect Four, Hangman, Yahtzee and Zero Zap.

<1982>

The home computer industry "shake-out" begins.

<1983>

Morning Star Software, Beaverton, Oregon, offers CP/M card for Peripheral Expansion Box.

-H/S Enterprises, Suffern, NY. offers a custom designed carrying case for the 99/4A that let you take your computer on the road with you. The product let you pack the console, RF modulator, cassette recorder, speech synthesizer, power supply and several cassette tapes in a high-impact carrying case. It retails for $59.95.

-Not-Polyoptics introduces the Texas Light Shooter in six gun shape.

-TI signs with Spinnaker Software to produce FACEMAKER and STORY MACHINE for the 99/4A, and they also reach an agreement with SEGA to produce 99/4A versions of CONGO BONGO, STAR TREK and BUCK ROGERS.

-The Chicago Users Group goes on line with the first Users Group BBS.

-Ralph Fowler's TIBBS goes on-line in Kennesaw, Georgia.

-MBX system debuts at Summer Consumer Electronics show in Chicago.

-Compute! magazine reports that the TI- 99/8 is close to production.

-ENTRAPMENT, MINI-WRITER, MOONMINE and SNEGGIT debut at Summer CES.

-Basic Tips by Amiist book appears.

-Doryt Systems releases 32K stand alone unit for the 99/4A, along with printer hookup called "Paraprint".

-Vaughn Software, author of the BITMAC drawing program, releases a new series of game programs on cassette.

-First issue of TI USER, a British 99er publication, appears.

-Counterpoint Software, St. Louis, Mo. changes its name to Challenger Software International.

-Memory Devices, Lilburn, Ga., changes it name to BizWare Inc.

<1984>

Super Extended Basic utility by Jim Hollender debuts.

-The first spelling checker ever written for TI-Writer debuts from Omaha, Nebraska author Thomas Kirk of Dragonslayer-American Software.

-CorComp file for bankruptcy protection under Chapter 11.

-ST.NICK and SCHNOZ-OLA game cartridges are released by FunWare.

<1985>

CorComp releases TRIPLE TECH CARD for PE Box that contains 64K printer buffer, time and date clock and ability to put spech synthesizer chip into the expansion box.

-Monty Schmidt releases "TECHIE" BBS.

-PERSONAL AUDITOR version 1.0 released by PRK DataBasics Grand Junction, Colo.

-ASGARD LIGHT PEN by Bob Emmel debuts.

-Barry Traver's GENIAL TRAVELER disk debuts.

<1986>

Danny Michael enhancements to Extended Basic and Editor/Assembler modules for for Cram Kracker are released.

<1987>

Super Extended Basic module, written by Craig Miller, with the help of others such as Danny Michael, Mike Dodd and M. Shillingburg, is released by the Triton Products Company, Foster City, Cal.

-Grand Ram is announced by DataBiotics.

-GRAPHX Slideshow is announced.

<1988>

Myarc releases MDOS 1.06, GPL 1.02 and Disk Manager Five V1.21 for the 9640.

-Tony Lewis begins a series of tutorial articles on the TMS9918A VDP chip, that are published in MICROPENDIUM.

-Myarc releases 512K ram card for 9640.

-Asgard Software releases PrEditor by Tom Bentley and Column Attack, which is the first game program to be released that is written in 99Fortran.

-CaDD Electronics, a Haverhill, Mass. firm, releases Gramulator, a successor of sorts to the short-lived GramKracker produced by Millers Graphics in 1985.

Barry Boone releases ARCHIVER III.

-Beery Miller, 5455 Marina Cove #1, Memphis, TN. 38115 begins offering "9640 News", the first on-disk newsletter for owners of the Myarc Geneve 9640 computer.

-Myarc announces a 512K card for Geneve

TRIVIA:

Did you know that;

-Someone out there in TI land produced disk versions of several of the better known TI entertainment/game cartridges like; A-Maze-ing, Ambulance, Blastol, Burger Builder, Buck Rogers, Car Wars, Chisolm Trail, Congo Bongo, Connect Four, Espial, Face Maker, Fathom, Football, Hangman, Hunt the Wumpus, Mash, Microsurgeon, Moon Mine, MunchMan, Music Maker, Othello, Popeye, Q*Bert, Soccer, St. Nick, Star Trek, TI-Invaders, Video Chess, Yahtzee,

-There were two MunchMan games? The original MunchMan game released by Texas Instruments in 1981 had a title screen which sported a huge mouth with giant teeth and buggy eyes? When you pressed a key or the fire button to signify that you were ready to play the jaws on the mouth closed in a chomping motion. The same program also had the MunchMan (our hero) eating dots (ala Pac-Man) instead of laying down a chain as the 1982 (the current) version does. The 1981 release also had had the power pills represented by pulsating circles instead of the cute little TI symbols that we are familiar with. Personally, I like the 1982 version better. Looks like someone at TI did too.

-Software Specialties, the same Evergreen, Colorado outfit that gave us Midnight Mason and TI-Toad, also producted Micro Pinball and Micro Pinball II? You may recall that computer-game giant Broderbund Software was scheduled to produce a pinball game called David's Midnight Magic (and another game called Choplifter) for the 99/4A, but dropped the plans after the October '83 bailout by TI. Until I discovered the Software Specialties games, I didn't realize that a 99/4A pinball game existed outside of the Extended Basic one that John Behnke wrote while with the Chicago TI Users Group. Both of the Software Specialites pinball games are 100% assembly and a joy to play. If you are interested in obtaining them, try writing to:

Software Specialties
P.O. Box 3692
Ocala, Florida
32678-3692

I cannot guarantee that this address is still good though. It is about three years old. I believe that DataBiotics may also have released one or both of the programs in cartridge format too, but I haven't confirmed that yet.

-E.M. Smith of 3506 Garden Drive in Knoxville, Tn. 37918 used to offer bumper stickers for sale that read: "I'm a 99/4A booster. I love my TI-9/4A. We eat Apples for lunch"?

-The LA 99ers formed January 27, 1982 as the Los Angeles-South Bay 99/4 Users Group? Bob Saunders was the first group president and Bob Delpit, author of the DelPlan spreadsheet, was the group's first newsletter editor. Dick Martin and Jerry Price (of TexComp fame) were club librarians. Sam Tepper (any relation to Mini-Mag 99 editor Leslyn Tepper, I wonder?) and Fred McCarty, author of the TexTiger word processor, were program chairmen.

-In June 1982 TI announced the release of 45 new modules/programs for the TI-99? Among the software listed was Parsec ($39.95), Multiplan ($99.95), TI-Writer ($99.95), Alpiner ($39.95), Chisolm Trail ($39.95) and Logo II ($129.95). Obviously not all of it appeared on schedule, but it must have been a thrill for the new TI owner to see that kind of support.

-In May 1982 TI offered a free Pascal spreadsheet called FREE FORM to anyone purchasing the new P-Code system? I had never heard of the program before, but I guess that's what trivia is all about.

-Ron Nelson designed the TOPICS log for the LA 99ers newsletter in February 1983 and it is still in use today?

-DataSoft, the Chatsworth, California company that had originally planned to release Zaxxon for the 99/4A, cancelled the plans because the program apparently could not be housed in a module and they didn't feel that there were enough owners with expansion systems to justify the release of a disk version. Bummer!

-The never to be released "BattleStar Galactica" game module for our 99/4A allowed two TI-99/4A's to be interfaced for two players to do battle in three dimensional space, complete with speech capabilities?

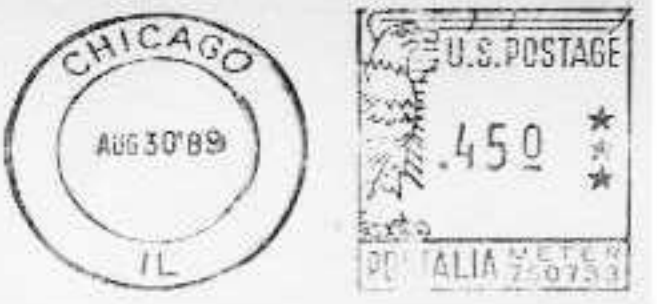
-When the Disk Manager II module was first released in February 1983, disk controller card owners were charged a $9.95 upgrade fee? TI started shipping the new module with all disk controller cards in May 1983?

-TI had a marketing program called the Computer Advantage Club?. It was a marketing tool designed to educate users in computer usage and software applications, offered among other things; a 5-hour course on TI-Writer for $49.95, an 8-hour course on Multiplan for $95.00, a 4-hour Pre-School course for $35.00 and a 10-hour course on Advanced (Extended) Basic Programming for $75.00. The courses were taught by Product Support Representatives, who were local users themselves, picked by TI to act as "area managers" for TI-99/4A product promotion. I don't know if these folks were paid any money for their efforts, but they did get all the newest hardware and software for their trouble.

Chicago TI User's Group
P.O. Box 578341
Chicago, Ill. 60657

First Class Mail

Address Correction Requested



EDITOR'S NOTES. . . .

It's good to see the face of Bernie Kucharski around again. Bernie was a great aide while I was the librarian. He has again come to my rescue. He came over around 11:00 Sat 8-19 to help me get the newsletter out. As soon as he got there, I ended up taking my wife to the Emergency Room. Bernie came along and helped with the kids. The poor guy spent 7 hrs. with me doing non-TI work. We had no lunch. Finally they released my wife and we ate dinner around 7:00.

After all that, Bernie was still willing to help. Our whole day had been shot. Bernie stayed till 2:45 Sunday morning helping me get this newsletter out. If that isn't the sign of a True Blue Friend, I don't know what is. TI people are crazy with love of their machine and helping others. THANKS A BUNCH, BERNIE!!!!! I OWE YOU A BIG ONE.

My thanks to all the members that wrote articles for this month's newsletter. It may not be a Super Summer issue, but at least a few members cared enough to write. Besides, 36 pages isn.t too shabby. Thankyou for all your hard work and efforts. I can see that you put many hours and labor into these articles. I really appreciate your efforts. I applaud you and your fine work. Again, I must thank Bill Gaskill for his VERY INFORMATIVE articles. He has truely got to be the Roving Reporter of the TI Community. THANKS, BILL!